

# Documents on Diplomacy: Exercises

## Behind the Scenes: The Treaty of Paris, 1783

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Identify the negotiators for the *Treaty of Paris, 1783* who could have made or did make the statements listed below.
- Match quotes with Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Jay, Henry Laurens, Richard Oswald, David Hartley, or Comte de Vergennes.
- Quotes marked with \* are actual quotes. The others are historic fiction.
- Documents referenced: *Notes of Conversation between Benjamin Franklin and Richard Oswald*, *Benjamin Franklin's Peace Journal*, and *John Adams' Journal of the Peace Negotiations*.
- Then, Explain the significance of each quote.

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- \*01. "I am of your opinion, and will go on with these gentlemen in the business without consulting this court."
02. "I do feel better about the role I have in this negotiation compared to my earlier encounters with the French court."
03. "I love to have people gather at my home in Passy."
04. "The breach between Great Britain and its colonies and the declaration of independence was declared without encouragement from us."
- \*05. "From first to last I ever insisted upon it with the English gentlemen that the fisheries and the Mississippi, if America was not satisfied in those points, would be the sure and certain sources of a future war. . ."
06. "I know that America wishes to include Canada as part of its possessions in the peace treaty. However, it should remain within our domain."
07. "I sign this Treaty that there should be a firm and perpetual peace between his Britannic Majesty and the said states, and between the subjects of the one and the citizens of the other, wherefore all hostilities both by sea and land shall from henceforth cease."
08. "I introduced the Marquis de la Fayette to Mr. Oswald and Mr. Grenville. We met for breakfast, had a wonderful conversation, and did not part until after one o'clock."
09. "I concur with Mr. Adams that we should negotiate this treaty without the involvement of France. We must convince Mr. Franklin that this is necessary."
10. "I bring word that Britain desires Reconciliation with the Americans."
11. "The French called me '*Le Washington de la negociation*,' but I think the title belongs to Mr. Jay."
12. "I would not pose for the painting proposed by Benjamin West. The peace treaty was signed and I wanted nothing else to do with the process."
13. "I was captured by the British during the war and after my release became an American peace negotiator in Paris."
14. "I will communicate with the King and advise you tomorrow of his reactions. It is certain that he wishes Justice and Dignity for all Allies."
- \*15. "As Soon as I arrived in Paris, I waited on Mr. Jay, and learned from him the rise and progress of the negotiations. Nothing that has happened since the beginning of the controversy in 1761 has ever struck me more forcibly, or affected me more intimately, than the entire coincidence of principles and opinions between him and me."

## *Behind the Scenes: Answer Key*

- \*01. Benjamin Franklin.** He agreed with John Adams and John Jay to negotiate the peace treaty with Britain without involving France. He later had to mollify the French for this dismissal. From document, *John Adams' Journal of the Peace Negotiations*
- 02. John Adams.** In France seeking monetary and military assistance during the Revolution, Adams was too abrupt and brusque (especially compared with Ben Franklin) in his dealings with the French. He was snubbed in favor of Franklin.
- 03. Benjamin Franklin.** Franklin was adept at the salon style of entertainment, being quite happy to come to terms of agreement while dining and chatting at his home in Passy, a village just outside of Paris. (Passy is part of Paris today.)
- 04. Comte de Vergennes.** The Count was King Louis XVI's Foreign Minister. He negotiated with the Americans and British to establish a treaty. This statement, based on information from the document, *Benjamin Franklin's Peace Journal*, was in response to the British minister Grenville's remark that France had encouraged the Americans to revolt.
- \*05. John Adams.** In this direct quote from the document, *John Adams' Journal of the Peace Negotiations*, Adams warns that if fishing rights and access to the Mississippi River were not established, they could be sources of a future war. He correctly portended the War of 1812.
- 06. Richard Oswald.** This statement is based on document, *Notes of Conversation between Benjamin Franklin and Richard Oswald*. It is obvious that the Americans hoped to gain Canada as a result of the war between Britain and the United States. In turn, the British had no such inclinations.
- 07. David Hartley.** Hartley signed the Treaty of Paris, 1783 for Britain.
- 08. Benjamin Franklin.** Adapted from the document, *Benjamin Franklin's Peace Journal*.
- 09. John Jay.** John Adams and Jay realized that the United States would receive the best peace terms if they negotiated exclusively with the British.
- 10. Richard Oswald.** Adapted from the document, *Notes of Conversation between Benjamin Franklin and Richard Oswald*.
- 11. John Adams.** Adapted from the document, *John Adams' Journal of the Peace Negotiations*.
- 12. David Hartley.** The painter, Benjamin West, wanted to commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Paris, 1783, but the British delegation refused to sit for it. The American delegation sat for the painting which has empty white space where the British should be.
- 13. Henry Laurens.** He was one of the four American delegates to the peace negotiations.. See *Key Players: Section I, Revolutionary Era* for additional information.
- 14. Comte de Vergennes.** Adapted from document, *Benjamin Franklin's Peace Journal*. Vergennes kept King Louis XVI apprised of discussions involving the British and Americans.
- 15. John Adams.** From *John Adams' Journal of the Peace Negotiations*. Adams was thrilled that John Jay and he agreed that peace negotiations should not include France.